

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A thin film forming apparatus to form a thin film ~~by film-forming means~~ on each of a plurality of substrates held on an outer circumferential surface of a substrate holder that is rotatable about a rotating shaft, while the substrate holder is being rotated in an evacuable chamber, the thin film forming apparatus is characterized ~~in that it comprises~~ comprising:

a transferring to/from means to transfer device that transfers one of a substrate itself or a substrate fixing jig fixedly holding a substrate or a plurality of substrates that is ~~to be~~ removeably secured securable onto the outer circumferential surface of the substrate holder ~~to/from the substrate holder in the evacuable chamber; and~~

securing means for releasably secure securing the substrate itself or the substrate fixing jig transferred by the transferring ~~to/from means~~ device onto the outer circumferential surface of the substrate holder.

2. (Currently Amended) The thin film forming apparatus according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the substrate holder is installed rotatably about a horizontal rotating shaft, and the transferring ~~to/from means~~ device transfers one of the substrate fixing jig and the substrate itself in a horizontal direction.

3. (Currently Amended) The thin film forming apparatus according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the transferring ~~to/from means~~ device transfers one of the substrate fixing jig and the substrate itself in an axial direction of the rotating shaft.

4. (Currently Amended) The thin film forming apparatus according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the transferring ~~to/from means~~ device transfers one of the substrate fixing jig and the substrate itself in a direction parallel to an outer circumferential surface of the substrate holder.

5. (Currently Amended) The thin film forming apparatus according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein both the transferring to/from action by the transferring ~~to/from means~~ device and the securing action by the ~~securing means~~ for releasably securing are performed in a depressurized environment.

6. (Currently Amended) The thin film forming apparatus according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the releasing action by the ~~securing means~~ for releasably securing is controlled by an electrical signal.

7. (Currently Amended) The thin film forming apparatus according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the ~~securing means~~ for releasably securing has a mechanism to hold one of the substrate fixing jig and the substrate itself by pressing with a retaining member means, and a mechanism to release one of the substrate fixing jig and the substrate itself from the holding by compressing the retaining ~~means~~ member by one of a drive unit mounted outside of the evacuable chamber ~~[[and]]~~ or a drive unit mounted inside of the substrate holder.

8. (Currently Amended) The thin film forming apparatus according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the securing means for releasably securing secures the substrate fixing jig by magnetic force.

9. (Currently Amended) The thin film forming apparatus according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the transferring ~~to/from means~~ device is installed in a transferring chamber which is connected to the evacuable chamber via a valve, and the transferring chamber is evacuable.

10. (Currently Amended) The thin film forming apparatus according to claim 9, ~~characterized in that it further comprises~~ comprising a load/unload chamber which is connected to the transferring chamber via a valve, and the load/unload chamber is evacuable.

11. (Currently Amended) The thin film forming apparatus according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the film forming means is formed by one of sputtering means, deposition means, and CVD means, or a combination thereof ~~of these means~~.

12. (Currently Amended) The thin film forming apparatus according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein one of a reaction gas supplying means device to supply a reaction gas, a plasma exposing means device to expose plasma, a ion irradiating means device to irradiate ions, and an etching means device to etch a portion of the thin

film, or a combination thereof ~~of these means~~ is applicable to the thin film ~~formed by the~~
~~film-forming means.~~

13. (New) The thin film forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the substrate fixing jig comprises outwardly bent end parts, the outwardly bent end parts defining a middle substrate fixing portion for receiving the substrate and defining a gap between the substrate holder and the substrate fixing jig when the substrate fixing jig is mounted to the substrate holder.

14 (New) The thin film forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the means for releasably securing comprises an upper securing member and a lower securing member configured to receive an end part of the substrate fixing jig.

15. (New) The thin film forming apparatus according to claim 13, wherein the means for releasably securing comprises a moveable shaft, and a retaining member biasing the moveable shaft.

16. (New) The thin film forming apparatus according to claim 15, wherein the means for releasably securing comprises a hold-down plate fixedly attached to an upper end of the moveable shaft.